

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Porti indicted in stealing fish from Univ. of AZ Agricultural Center

(Phoenix, Arizona-June 16, 2003) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced the indictment of Tony Lynn Porti, 52, for three counts of theft and one count of fraudulent scheme. Mr. Porti, a former aquaculture specialist for the University of Arizona, Maricopa Agricultural Center, is accused of taking over \$25,000 in fish raised at the Maricopa Agricultural Center using University of Arizona trucks, personnel and equipment to deliver the fish to customers who paid him.

A yearlong investigation by the University of Arizona Police Department resulted in the indictment.

The theft of fish took place between January, 1998 to May, 2002. The Maricopa Agricultural Center raises grass carp and tilapia for sale to irrigation districts and golf courses for control of algae and weeds, catfish for urban fishing programs and koi for ornamental fish. He is charged with theft of his salary when he consulted for companies while being paid by the University and theft of the records related to the raising of fish at the Maricopa Agricultural Center which he took when he resigned on May 24, 2002.

Mr. Porti appeared today in Pima County Superior Court and pled not guilty to the charges. His next hearing is scheduled before Judge Lina Rodriguez in July.

If convicted of all charges, Mr. Porti could be sentenced to prison for up to 23.25 years and ordered to pay restitution. Assistant Attorney General John Evans is assigned to this case.